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Door County Public Health Department News Release— ENTEROVIRUS D68 CONFIRMED IN DOOR COUNTY

Door County Public Health Department has been notified by the Wisconsin Department of Health that a Door County child has tested positive for the respiratory virus, Enterovirus D68 or EV-D68.

Rhonda Kolberg, public health director/health officer stated “Enterovirus infections are common, mostly occurring in the summer and fall. Most people infected with EV-D68 do not have symptoms or have mild respiratory symptoms. However, infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to become ill when infected with enteroviruses. That’s because they do not yet have immunity (protection) from previous exposures to these viruses. Children with asthma seem to have a higher risk for severe respiratory illness.”

Enterovirus can cause mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, and muscle aches. The virus can be found in secretions such as saliva, nasal mucus, and sputum. It is likely spread from person-to-person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches surfaces.

Here is what you can do if your child has these symptoms:

- If symptoms are mild, such as with the common cold, parents should do what they normally do such as increase fluids, ensure rest, keep the child home from school, and give fever- and pain-reducing medicines, as needed.
- If symptoms worsen or do not get better within a week, or if new wheezing begins, contact your child’s health care provider.
- If at any time your child is having difficulty breathing, has blue lips, or is gasping for air, you should seek immediate medical care.

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infections. There are no antiviral medications available to treat the virus or vaccines to prevent it. Many infections will be mild and often go away after a few days. However, some people with severe respiratory symptoms may need to be hospitalized. Children with asthma seem to have a higher risk for severe respiratory illness.

Children with asthma should take all of their regularly prescribed medications and have rescue medications on hand. Asthmatic children and their family members should also take advantage of the influenza vaccine since people with asthma often have a difficult time with respiratory illnesses. Asthma can also be controlled by avoiding the triggers that can cause an attack, such as tobacco smoke. If you have specific questions, contact your child's pediatrician or asthma doctor.

The Health Department continues to monitor reports of respiratory illness in the county to identify potential outbreaks. Health care providers have been notified that Enterovirus D68 has been reported in the community. Surveillance activities are ongoing.

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You can help to protect yourself from EV-D68 and other respiratory illnesses by:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue
- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
- Disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick

For more information about Enterovirus D68, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/EV-D68.html> or

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/DiseasePages/enteroviruses.htm>